



Stolen Through Worlds



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Chapter 1 by Lauren Garner

I was dazed, the searing light biting through my comforting dark. Why does waking up have to hurt so much?

The fog cleared from my mind as I stretched. I could feel my face contorting as my eyes squeezed shut and a roaring yawn bellowed from my mouth. My arms went completely straight and my hands shot out like I was reaching for something. Oh, that always feels good. Just stretching and yawning like I don't have a care in the world. It's the only good thing about mornings.

I started to run my hand through my hair like I did every day. I swear I must have looked like crap, just sitting there blinking in the light. Like some recovering alcoholic. As if.

I had had the craziest dream last night. I was in the middle of the woods, like, way out there, where there aren't any buildings or lights. It's just trees everywhere, and the faint smell of wet earth. It was kind of misty, and cloudy too. Not the bad kind of cloudy. More like that smoky white, you know, like you're in some kind of English drama? Anyway, I'm there, and there's this-- guy. At least, I think it was a guy. He was just staring at me, sitting on this log. His eyes were-- well, they were really dark and deep. Like the eyes of an owl, or a deer or something. I know I sound like an idiot, but if you had just seen...

Well, we didn't talk in the dream. He just looked at me. His hair was this really dark brown, which made him seem to fit right in. He looked really, serene.

He said my name too. The way it came out of his mouth, it was like he was savoring the vowels and consonants, like some sort of... "Jessica." Just my name. Nothing else I wanted to savor this moment.

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There was something else about him that was off. Something strange...

"Jessica." THAT VOICE! I nearly jumped out of my bed. I stifled a scream as I turned. All the smokiness, all the cute guy hotness disappeared as I contemplated having to call the police for a break-in.

And there he sat, on my desk chair just a couple feet away. Staring at me, with some nerve. I was livid.

"Who the HECK are you?! And WHAT are you doing in my ROOM?!" I yelled, grabbing my lamp from the nightstand. I would not go unarmed.

He smiled, an unfortunately beautiful smile, an impish grin hidden under his right dimple. Oh yes he had dimples. Why wouldn't the dude have frickin' dimples?!

"Jessica, don't you remember? Or are you telling me your memory's faded that fast?" Sounded like he was from some sort of Shakespearean drama. I would've gagged if I hadn't been about to swoon. I tried to make it look like I wasn't weak, so I threw my gaze to his face determinedly.

That's when I saw them.

His ears. They were pointed.

"oh my gosh." I muttered. His face grew confused.

"What is it?" he asked, as if my earlier questions had been lost on him, and he was here for a chit-chat.

"You're an elf? But...but... elves don't exist! Magic doesn't exist! This is the real world! Why are you in my room, where are you even from what the..." I trailed off, a delusional grin taking hold of my face.

"Oh, I know. I'm still dreaming! You're not even here right now! This is just, like, part two to an amazing dream! See look--" I got out of bed, walked straight up to him and planned on putting my hand straight through his chest. When it instead hit him very hard, both of us yelled--he in pain, and I in utmost fear.

"Jessica, I'm real. You're real. Elves are real! Why would you even ask when you are one?" he quaked, backing up slightly from me. I stared at him, dread in my eyes. Surely he was lying. But curiosity got the better of me, and I reached my hands up to my ears.

Two pointed tips met my trembling fingers

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